

Standard 9

Artifact: Weekly Progress Report with my cooperating teacher.

Date Experienced Completed: Spring 2010

Description: My artifact is my weekly progress report signed by my cooperating teacher from Shullsburg Junior High and High school, showing my hours of observations and experiences for that week of February 2010.

Wisconsin Teacher Standard Alignment: I believe that this experience aligns with standard nine - The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on pupils, parents, professionals in the learning community and others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

During my pre-student teaching at Shullsburg school district I was allowed to prepare and present lessons. For my first lesson to the freshman biology class I prepared a lot of notes on the genetic use of punnett squares. I completed the lesson and went over my performance with the cooperating teacher. I felt nervous, although I knew the material well. I also felt I did not have a lot of higher level questioning in the lesson. My cooperating teacher felt it was not a lesson very well suited to higher level questioning and felt I had taught the lesson well.

Evaluating my lesson after teaching allows me to reflect on how well I taught and gave me ideas of how I can improve the next time. I was also able to see that not every lesson is going to incorporate higher order levels of thought but can be the base to grow additional experiences.

On another morning I was observing the same freshman biology class. I had brought with me an energy drink that I had not finished prior to class starting. One of the students asked me if I was tired. I asked why and she said because I had an energy drink. This was another instance of realizing how my choices are viewed by students. I did not realize that what I chose to drink allowed the student to make assumptions about my alertness. It did allow me to make better choices for the future and now I bring water so that I can make a positive impact on my students.

I also attended a musical concert in the evening at the school. While looking for a seat with my family, a student in one of my classes saw me, and introduced me to her mother. This was an example of where I will be interacting with not only the students, but also the parents. It will be at those times that how I present myself will reflect on how the parents view me as an educator. It is important to know that even outside the classroom, I am still viewed as a teacher. It doesn't change when the bell rings, I will still be their teacher.

An illustration of having an effect on others in the learning community is an email I had received from a substitute teacher who's

daughter is in one of my classes. She was commending me for taking the leap to return to school to finish my degree and to become a teacher. Her daughter had come home excited to tell her how I was helping out in her classroom. The mother understood how challenging and rewarding teaching can be and felt I will make an excellent teacher.

As a future educator it is important for me to know that once I am a teacher, I am a teacher twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. I am viewed as a teacher wherever I am, in whatever I do, to whoever I see. Therefore I need to continually reflect on my professionalism, my appearance and my performance to make sure I can meet the highest standards a teacher should be.

UW - Platteville School of Education Knowledge, Skill and Disposition

Statement Alignment: This experience best aligns with KSD4.a Reflects on Teaching. The candidate makes an accurate and thoughtful reflection of her teaching effectiveness, is aware of specific elements of her teaching that contributed to successful instruction, and can offer alternative teacher action to predict the future success of alternate approaches. After my first lesson, my cooperating teacher and I sat down to reflect on how I felt I did. I was pretty hard on myself, and the cooperating teacher felt I did a nice job with it being my first lesson. He understood my frustration of not finding more higher level questions to ask the students, but felt this particular lesson was straightforward and didn't need to have those types of questions. He had created a worksheet that reinforced the lesson I had taught, and I was able to assess how well I did by how the student completed the worksheet. I was also able to walk around and help individual students who still struggled with the more complicated versions of the examples I had gone over. In the future I think I would like to have added more technology to the original lesson, by using a Smart board program specifically geared towards punnett squares.

I was able to pull in higher order questions in a second lesson I prepared on selective breeding to pull the students into real-world applications of genetics. The teacher usually uses pictures of examples, where I had asked if we could use the computer room to have the students more involved in the search for breeding in genetics. Reflecting back after that lesson, I could have added a couple more examples to search, but it also worked out well that the students had time left to do their own research, and it was interesting to see where it led them. The students were clearly excited to be active participants in the search, which led me to believe it was a successful lesson. The examples were dramatic, and the students were able to apply it to scenarios that would affect their own lives.

This experience also aligns with:

KSD4.d Contributes to the School and District

KSD4.e Grows and Develops Professionally
KSD4.f Shows Professionalism

What I learned about teaching/learning from this experience: I learned that by reflecting on a lesson taught, you can make adjustments to make the lesson more meaningful to the student. If it is meaningful to the student then the student will retain the information long term. Reflection is an important part of the teaching process because we can always improve the next time, and look for ways to make the material new and exciting.

What I learned about myself as a prospective educator as a result of this experience/artifact: As a future educator I learned that I can always improve my approach to teaching. Through my pre-student teaching experience I have been able to see a number of different approaches to teaching and I can see what works and what hasn't worked. I can then tailor my lessons to allow the students to get the most out of the lesson. It has also taught me that I may not be perfect the first time. I need to re-evaluate my lesson and make improvements or changes. By using assessments I can see how my changes have helped the students, or it may not be as clear as I intended. Without reflections, I as a teacher would never improve. I have also learned that I am always going to be viewed as a teacher, and I need to make conscious, positive choices in my life so that I can continue to be a role model for my students.